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Chairperson: Ms. Intelmann ..... (Estonia)
later: Mr. Barry (Vice-Chairperson) ..... (Senegal)

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06-57866 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 55: Globalization and interdependence (A/61/486)

(a) Globalization and interdependence (A/61/286)

(b) International migration and development (A/60/871, A/61/73, 91, 170, 187, 230, 315, 316, 321, 343, 345, 346, 506 and 515 and A/C.2/61/2)

(c) Culture and development (A/61/86 and 321 and A/61/378-S/2006/761)

(d) Preventing and combating corrupt practices and transfer of assets of illicit origin and returning such assets, in particular to the countries of origin, consistent with the United Nations Convention against Corruption (A/61/177)

(e) Integration of the economies in transition into the world economy (A/61/93, 126, 181 and 269)

1. **Mr. Civili** (Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs) introduced the Secretary-General's report on the role of innovation, science and technology in pursuing development in the context of globalization, contained in document A/61/286.

2. Most countries that had managed the forces of globalization had been able to take advantage of science and new technologies. However, the ability of developing countries to access scientific research and innovation and to adapt it to their own needs varied greatly. Ultimately, the countries themselves must develop policies that would enable them to tap the benefits of science and apply those benefits to their developmental concerns.

3. At the same time, the international community had a crucial role to play. Challenges included achieving an adequate diffusion of scientific and technical knowledge, while avoiding excessively high costs of proprietary technology, and eliminating adverse effects on vulnerable groups in society by ensuring both affordable access to medicines and the diffusion of technical knowledge among farmers and small urban producers.

4. The report proposed the creation of an international database on publicly funded research and development that would assist developing countries in accessing technologies. There had already been an increase in the number of open and collaborative projects designed to create "knowledge public goods" including, inter alia, free and open source software, the human genome project and the World Wide Web.

5. Another common trend was the collaboration among developing countries to find scientific solutions to complex developmental concerns. Countries such as Brazil, China, India and South Africa had emerged as regional actors with increasing technological capabilities. Such collaborative efforts were promising and deserved to be supported.

6. In conclusion, the key developmental role of science, technology and innovation in enhancing economic well-being had been widely recognized. Building scientific and technological capacity required sound institutional-building as well as the nurturing of a complex network of partnerships among a wide variety of stakeholders spread across the globe.

7. **Ms. Zlotnik** (Director, Population Division), introducing item 55 (b) on international migration and development and reporting on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 60/227, said that international migration could be a positive force for development in countries of origin and destination, provided it was supported by the right policies.

8. At the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, speakers had stressed the importance of peace and security, the rule of law and the provision of decent work in countries of origin to ensure that people migrated out of choice rather than necessity. There had been widespread support for incorporating international migration into the development agenda and for integrating migration issues into national development strategies, including poverty reduction strategies.

9. It had been recognized that migrant remittances improved the lives of millions and had a positive effect on the economy. However, more needed to be done to reduce transfer costs and supporting policies were needed to maximize the development potential of remittances. Also, Governments should bear in mind that remittances were not a substitute for ODA, FDI or debt relief. Speakers had unanimously condemned the crime of trafficking in persons and had noted that

vulnerable groups, such as migrant women and children who were victims of trafficking or who were seeking asylum from persecution, needed special protection. Finally, the majority had expressed support for the Secretary-General's proposal for the establishment of a global forum where Governments could discuss best practices and policies concerning international migration and its link with global development.

10. **Ms. Tichen** (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)) said that UNESCO was the leading advocate for bringing culture to the heart of the development agenda during the era of globalization.

11. In 2005, UNESCO had adopted the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, which established for the first time the link between culture and development in international law. As provided in article 1, one of the objectives of the Convention was "to reaffirm the importance of the link between culture and development for all countries, particularly for developing countries, and to support actions undertaken nationally and internationally to secure recognition of the true value of [that] link".

12. UNESCO continued to assist Member States by elaborating and promoting cultural policies, paying particular attention to the cultural dimensions in development policies so as to contribute more effectively to the fight against poverty and support the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). It was also working to advance South-South cooperation and disseminate principles and good practices conducive to sustainable tourism and development. Finally, as lead agency for the Decade on Education for Sustainable Development, UNESCO was working to mainstream cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue in education for sustainable development.

13. **Ms. Hrbkova** (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)) introduced the Secretary-General's report on preventing and combating corrupt practices and transfer of assets of illicit origin and returning such assets to the countries of origin, contained in document A/61/177.

14. It was encouraging that the number of States parties to the Convention against Corruption had risen since the preparation of the report. At present, there were 140 signatories and 70 States parties to the Convention. The surprisingly rapid increase in the number of parties gave hope that the Convention had the potential for universal adherence and it was promising that the first session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Convention was soon to take place. The Office had launched an inter-agency anti-corruption coordination initiative called the International Group for Anti-Corruption Coordination, which would meet immediately following the first session of the Conference of States Parties so as to build on the outcome of that session, particularly in the area of technical assistance.

15. The question of asset recovery had been identified by Member States as a priority issue for consideration by the Conference at the first session. The Secretary-General's report summarized current efforts to recover assets derived from corruption and suggested ways in which the implementation of chapter V of the Convention could have an impact on the return of those funds.

16. In conclusion, wide participation and an optimal balance between developed and developing countries from all regions in the Conference was crucial to ensure that any decisions taken were based on broad representation. The countries that had not ratified the Convention should do so without delay, to allow them to participate in the Conference as full members.

17. **Mr. Vos** (Director, Development Policy and Analysis Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs) introduced the Secretary-General's report on integration of the economies in transition into the world economy, contained in document A/61/269.

18. Economies in transition had registered a strong performance during the 2004-2005 period and had made substantial progress in strengthening their integration into global markets. That progress had been greatly helped by favourable conditions of growing world trade, high commodity prices and the low cost of international finance. Prudent fiscal and monetary policies and more comprehensive economic reforms had supported economic stabilization and had improved the environment for business investment.

19. Strong economic growth had helped improve living conditions in the economies in transition in recent years. Considerable progress had been made in reducing poverty, ensuring gender equality and promoting better health and education, particularly in

the new European Union member States and the accession countries. There had been less progress in the transition economies in South-Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and poverty remained disturbingly high in certain regions.

20. The European Union played an important role in cementing institutional reforms and deepening market reforms. Adaptation to European Union institutions had promoted the broadening of the growth process in the countries of Central Europe and the Baltic States; however, growing uncertainty about further European Union enlargement could affect the pace of economic reforms in South-Eastern Europe.

21. The pace and pattern of the progress made in the integration of the economies in transition into the world economy varied widely. In particular, there were important differences in trade dependence and external vulnerabilities, implying that some economies were reaping greater long-term benefits from increased integration than others. Although most of the new European Union members had the advantage of integrating into producer-driven trade networks in high value-added sectors, the growth performance of the resource-rich countries, particularly those in the CIS region, remained vulnerable to the volatility in world commodity prices. To enhance their prospects of gaining from trade, such countries needed to diversify their economies into high-productivity manufacturing industries and services sectors. The challenge for the South-Eastern European countries, which were also affected by external vulnerabilities, was to find an adequate policy mix in order to gradually move their trade structures to higher value-added sectors.

22. Further integration of the capital markets of transition economies had resulted from FDI and strong growth had attracted large inflows of speculative capital. Those developments posed new macroeconomic policy challenges, both among the new European Union members and in South-Eastern Europe. The macroeconomic policies of the new European Union member States were anchored to the adoption of the euro as a step forward in economic integration. However, fast adoption of the euro might lead to a slowdown of GDP growth and loss of income in some of those countries.

23. Increased mobility of people from the EU-8 and from South-Eastern Europe and CIS countries had led to a growing role for remittances as a source of external financing. However, there were a number of associated risks, such as vulnerability to economic downturns in the receiving countries and the effects of brain drain on the countries of origin, which might have difficulty developing their own productive base.

24. In conclusion, countries with economies in transition needed to develop domestic policies that strengthened institutional reforms and promoted economic restructuring in order to fully benefit from integration into the world economy and sustain economic growth. Although the international community, including United Nations agencies, had helped to foster the transformation process, further international cooperation would be needed in coming years.

25. **Ms. Schmidt** (Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States) said, with reference to the report of the Secretary-General on the role of innovation, science and technology in pursuing development in the context of globalization (A/61/286), that she wholeheartedly supported the notion that it was imperative that agricultural research and technological innovations be fostered so as to enable the rural poor to overcome poverty and to participate in the global economy. Despite the need for technological advances, improved trading conditions, including the discontinuation of agricultural subsidies, were needed in order to allow the least developed countries to compete on a level playing field. The impediments to trade in the form of increasing requirements to meet safety, quality and environmental standards constituted a significant barrier to trade by the least developed countries even for those goods that otherwise enjoyed preferential treatment. Other aspects that affected livelihoods and sustainable agricultural practices were land degradation, desertification, the adverse effects of climate change and recurring weather events. Preservation of ecosystems was an area where the most vulnerable countries needed full partnership and assistance from their development partners.

26. Referring to paragraph 47 (b) of the report, she noted that a number of developing countries had become major world economic players, emerging as important markets and as investors and providers of technical assistance and financial aid to follow developing countries. In many cases, such knowledge, expertise and technology were more appropriate to the

needs of other developing countries, as their socio-economic conditions were comparable, and also more affordable, with the result that many of them were increasingly looking southwards to advance their development objectives. South-South cooperation should be designed so as to leverage technical knowledge from wherever it was located and to apply it where it was needed. The report's recommendation that access to technology needed to be guaranteed to farmers and small urban producers and that adequate systems should be developed to generate and adapt appropriate technologies and disseminate them among small producers should be implemented as a matter of priority.

27. Migration had both negative and positive impacts on the development of countries of origin and countries of destination, but the poorest countries were more exposed to its negative impacts and benefited less from its positive ones. Migration from countries with low human development capital had unfortunately led to a significant loss of skilled workers. The most detrimental effect of that brain drain was caused by the migration of the upper end of the human capital distribution, which was critical for institution building and development. It was estimated that 34 per cent of migrants from least developed countries to countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) were skilled workers. Coupled with low education enrolment and high HIV/AIDS rates, such a brain drain had a disastrous effect on the ability of least developed countries to build productive capacities for sustained economic growth and sustainable development. However, migrant workers' remittances had almost doubled since 2000 and surpassed FDI. The Ministerial Conference of the Least Developed Countries on Migrants' Remittances, held in Cotonou, Benin, in February 2006, had adopted concrete and practical recommendations to all stakeholders in sending and receiving countries.

28. **Mr. Oosthuizen** (South Africa) speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that globalization and interdependence had brought new challenges for growth and sustainable development, particularly in developing countries. Some had successfully adapted to them and benefited from globalization, but many others, especially the least developed countries, had remained marginalized. Unfortunately for many in the developing world, difficult challenges remained in improving the creation and use of scientific knowledge, skills and technology to meet critical economic, social and development needs. Some of those challenges were mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General (A/61/286), but it was important to reiterate that the international technology gap was one of the main causes of the rapidly expanding socio-economic gap between rich and poor nations, which was a major challenge for developing countries in their efforts to achieve development goals.

29. Special efforts needed to be made to build and sustain scientific capacity at both individual and institutional levels through increased allocation of appropriate resources, diffusion of technology and building of partnerships. In his report, the Secretary-General had made a number of suggestions, of which South-South cooperation remained an important element. Ministers of Science and Technology of the Group of 77 and China had recently approved a decision to transform the Third World Network of Scientific Organizations into the Consortium of Science, Technology and Innovation for the South, which would contribute to the promotion and development of knowledge and technology in the South through the exchange of expertise. The Secretary-General had correctly identified the role the United Nations should play in disseminating useful scientific information to developing countries, but the importance of the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation should not be forgotten. The Group of 77 and China had welcomed the agreement reached in the Economic and Social Council to increase the membership of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, which would increase the voice and participation of developing countries. Member States must fulfil the commitment made at the 2005 World Summit that the United Nations would play an increasingly active role in ensuring that developing countries were able to achieve their goals in the area of innovation, science and technology.

30. Turning to the issue of migration and development, he said that migration was a complex issue which needed to be approached in a holistic and comprehensive manner. In his report (A/60/871), the Secretary-General had indicated that a sustained international dialogue should be established to share experiences and to develop effective modalities for international cooperation. The Group of 77 and China believed that conducting that dialogue within the

framework of the United Nations would also contribute to the strengthening of the multilateral system.

31. The effects of international migration on economic and social development highlighted the complex relationship between underdevelopment, poverty, social exclusion and migration. In pursuing internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, there was a need to focus on FDI, trade, foreign aid and debt relief so as to reverse underdevelopment, poverty and skills flight. With regard to the important issue of remittances in the context of migration and development, it was imperative to ensure the cheaper, faster and safer transfer of remittances, which were not a substitute for investment, trade, foreign aid and debt relief. There was also still a need further to consider and analyse how the migration of highly skilled persons and those with advanced education impacted the development efforts of developing countries.

32. **Ms. Fernández** (Finland), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania, the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey, the stablilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; and, in addition, Moldova and Ukraine, emphasized the social dimension of globalization, which could offer the means to tackle the most acute problems, including extreme poverty. The European Union welcomed the progress made in further integrating countries with economies in transition into the world economy, as well as their efforts to achieve the internationally agreed development goals. There was a need for further international support to address the specific concerns of those countries.

33. Welcoming the treatment in the report of the Secretary-General (A/61/286) of the inter-relationship between the information society and development, she said that the digital divide was both a consequence and a cause of inequalities. It led to an even wider knowledge divide between developed and developing countries, and therefore posed a challenge to future development policy planning. The European Union was convinced that information and communication technologies (ICTs) were not only a way of speeding up development but also could allow leap-frogging of several levels of technological development. The role of ICTs in promoting freedom of expression, democracy and transparency should also be given serious consideration in light of the importance of those factors in fostering economic and social progress.

34. While the report highlighted the role of the private sector and investment, especially venture capital, it had not made sufficient reference to the need for innovation policies to be accompanied by broader policy reforms that would create the right environment for innovation, such as macroeconomic stability, an active competition policy and predictable and transparent legal regimes. Innovations and ICT should be integrated into the curriculum. Without domestic incentives and more equitable income distribution, science and technology did not necessarily reach the poor. The multi-stakeholder participation in the World Summit on the Information Society and in its follow-up should be preserved and applied also in the work of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development.

35. Intellectual property rights could play a vital role in the development process for developing countries, but those countries must be able to take advantage of all the flexibilities available within the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). The report highlighted the importance of protecting genetic resources and traditional knowledge held by local communities and indigenous people, but appropriate forms of protection might also be found outside existing intellectual property rights systems.

36. The report of the Secretary-General on preventing and combating corrupt practices and transfer of assets of illicit origin and returning such assets to the countries of origin (A/61/177) had clearly pointed out that corruption was a major obstacle to development and a key element in economic underperformance. Efforts to combat it must therefore include strong measures to strengthen the rule of law and ensure equal access to justice by citizens. Governance included not only the fight against corruption but also respect for human rights, adherence to democratic principles and the rule of law, as well as economic, financial, social and environmental management. There was a need for increased international cooperation in the global fight against corruption, particularly in strengthening the identification, seizure and repatriation of assets and the delivery of appropriate and effective technical assistance. International cooperation and the sharing of good practice would reinforce the importance of good governance, transparent democracy and the rule of law.

The United Nations Convention against Corruption was the key legal instrument for setting global standards, and countries which had not yet done so were urged to sign and ratify it. The first Conference of States Parties to the Convention, to be held in Jordan in December 2006, would provide an opportunity to discuss how to ensure its proper implementation, including effective review mechanisms, and the roles that civil society and the private sector could play in fighting corruption.

37. During the recent High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, most States had agreed that well-managed legal migration could contribute to development and to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The discussion had proved that international migration and development needed to be discussed at the global level. It was vital to integrate migration concerns and issues, including the benefits which migrant workers' remittances brought to the economies of their countries of origin, into poverty reduction strategies and the development agenda. At the same time, it was necessary to include development aspects in national and regional immigration policies. Knowledge-sharing and capacity-building were crucial, as well as the focus on the migrants themselves.

38. **Mr. Hannesson** (Iceland) said that the many people of foreign origin who had come to Iceland had made a valuable contribution to society. International migration could make a positive contribution to sustainable development and economic growth in countries of origin and destination alike, and could be of substantial benefit to migrants if it was appropriately regulated and controlled. In order to reduce the negative impact of migration on migrants it was necessary to promote and protect their human rights.

39. Gender inequality could be both the cause and consequence of international migration. Promotion of gender equality would therefore help reduce the negative impact of migration. Although many migrants who entered the labour market in destination countries enjoyed greater opportunities, migration could also lead to the loss of formal contacts, social security and protection, which could affect women and men in different ways. It was worrying that migrant women increasingly tended to earn lower wages and experience less favourable terms and conditions of employment than men, one reason being that women were more likely to work in the informal sector.

40. The rapid growth of human trafficking and smuggling was a global problem that must be addressed at both the national and international levels. His Government had taken vigorous steps to combat the use of Iceland as a country of transit for such purposes. It was a signatory to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. Regional institutions had a major role to play in combating human trafficking, and Iceland had contributed actively to the anti-trafficking work of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

41. His delegation considered the issues discussed at the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development to be urgent and welcomed the substantive exchange of views that had taken place.

42. **Mr. Chulkov** (Russian Federation) said that effective management of the processes of globalization with a view to neutralizing their negative consequences and strengthening their existing positive aspects was possible only on the basis of a collective and comprehensive approach by the world community, with the central coordinating role being played by the United Nations. There was an increasing awareness of the complex and multifaceted nature of migration and its indissoluble link with socio-economic development, the demographic situation and human rights. A further expansion of cooperation should involve interaction at all levels — global, regional and subregional — with a view to determining the most mutually advantageous ways of giving effect to the beneficial influence and mitigating the negative consequences of migration. Regional processes and bilateral cooperation were the most effective forms of such interaction. A successful migration policy required improvement in the migration census and the development of a single, internationally comparable set of data.

43. The Russian Federation attached priority to expanding international cooperation with a view to preventing and rooting out corruption, money-laundering and the illegal transfer of money abroad. It had ratified the United Nations Convention against Corruption and called on States parties which had not yet done so to do likewise. The Group of Eight, at its summit meeting in Saint Petersburg, had agreed jointly

to combat corruption in Government administration, including at the highest level. The summit outcome document contained an Action Plan which included working with international financial centres with a view to denying safe haven to assets illicitly acquired, securing the protection of financial markets from criminal abuse, promoting information sharing on persons identified as corrupt, and securing the highest standards of financial transparency, including in Government procurement and concessions, as well as increasing efforts to combat money-laundering.

44. The report of the Secretary-General on integration of the economies in transition into the world economy clearly showed that progress had not been uniform among such countries; the problems were particularly acute in the low-income countries within the Commonwealth of Independent States, which needed international assistance to support their economic growth, to reduce poverty, and to help in the struggle against HIV/AIDS and other diseases, as well as in the solution of environmental problems. However, the report unfortunately lacked concrete recommendations as to how the world community, and the United Nations system in particular, might increase assistance for the socio-economic development of those countries in accordance with their national priorities. The Russian Federation hoped that the General Assembly would at its current session adopt the draft resolution on integration of the economies in transition into the world economy (A/C.2/61/L.11*), and called on Member States to become co-sponsors.

45. **Mr. Al-Hulaibi** (Bahrain) said that information technology should be harnessed to achieve internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. His delegation commended the report of the Secretary-General for highlighting the importance of information technology to development and for advocating a people-centred and inclusive information society.

46. The participants in both phases of the World Summit for the Information Society had emphasized their joint commitment to building an inclusive information society in which all members would be able to use fully their capabilities to further their development and improve their quality of life. Building such a society required solidarity and cooperation at the national and international levels among Governments and other stakeholders, namely the private sector, civil society and international organizations.

47. Bahrain had introduced technology into education through the King Hamad Project for Future Schools, which represented a qualitative advance in education and would enable Bahrainis to keep up with developments in science and technology in the twenty-first century.

48. **Mr. Basu** (India) said that, although globalization had generated unprecedented opportunities for all countries, it had also brought new challenges to which developing countries were having difficulty responding. The deepening of global imbalances continued to pose a major risk to global growth and stability. If the developing countries were to enjoy the autonomy and flexibility required to devise their own policies and strategies, the international community must ensure an appropriate balance between national policy space and international disciplines and commitments. The current impasse in the Doha Round was a cause for concern. A development-oriented outcome of the trade negotiations, with effective and operable special and differential treatment for developing countries, was imperative.

49. The role of the United Nations in shaping the international economic agenda had eroded over the years. Reform efforts must address the question of restoring the centrality of the development agenda of the United Nations. An equitable and rule-based regime must be devised to manage global trade, investment flows, technology transfers and the movement of services.

50. India fully recognized the importance of science and technology and was on a fast track to knowledge-led growth and knowledge sharing. Intellectual property rights regimes were often used in ways that hindered technology transfers to developing countries. Development dimensions must be integrated into such regimes as quickly as possible. The international community should also find pragmatic ways to promote research and development in developing countries.

51. It was ironic that the shrinking of the world resulting from improved technology and communications was accompanied by controls that restricted the movement of people from the developing world. Sending and receiving countries alike benefited from international migration. The developed countries

should be more receptive to the request from developing countries for increased access to their markets under mode 4 of the General Agreement on Trade in Services. The United Nations should focus on promoting partnerships among nations in order to maximize the benefits of international migration while reducing its negative effects.

52. **Ms. Blum** (Colombia) said that her delegation supported the proposal to establish a follow-up mechanism to the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development within the framework of the United Nations. The proposed global forum should strive to achieve tangible results on migration. A role for the United Nations in collecting, analysing and disseminating information on international migration was essential in order to dispel myths on the issue and guide policy formulation. Moreover, United Nations leadership was essential in order to lay the groundwork for partnerships on migration.

53. The Global Migration Group could facilitate cooperation and coordination among the relevant United Nations bodies and other international organizations and promote and channel the exchange of experience and best practices. The United Nations could provide technical assistance enabling Governments to prepare legislation on migration issues, develop strategies incorporating international migration considerations into development plans and strengthen their capacity to evaluate and manage migratory flows.

54. Her country had participated actively in regional consultations concerning migration, including the Sixth South American Conference on Migration, held in May 2006 in Asunción, Paraguay. In the Asunción Declaration, participants had rejected the criminalization of irregular migration and invoked the principle of shared responsibility for combating the smuggling of migrants, human trafficking and related crimes. That principle had a very concrete content, reach and implications under international law. Those were transnational crimes that must be prevented, prosecuted and punished. Irregular migration was not a criminal phenomenon and undocumented migrants were not criminals.

55. *Mr. Barry (Senegal), Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.*

56. **Mr. Berrah** (Algeria) said that the very successful High-level Dialogue had shed fresh light on the interactions between international migration and development. In general, his delegation endorsed the conclusions and recommendations in document A/61/515, in particular those focusing on the positive contribution of international migration to economic and social development in receiving and sending countries. Policies concerning international migration and development should be based on the principles of respect for human rights, solidarity and shared responsibility.

57. In seeking a balanced partnership on the issue, his Government detected a reflexive fear of migrants, especially when engaging with its partners of the North. The fear was sparked in particular by migrants of the Muslim faith, and arose from a supposed nexus of Islam and terrorism. That fear was being fanned by xenophobic and racist elements which used it to create the impression that migration was the cause of tension and of social disintegration and instability. Attempts to hijack the debate on migration and development in order to restrict migration were a means to avoid the substantive issues involved and would prove counterproductive in the long run.

58. Acting within the framework of the African Union, the African countries had, in record time, adopted a common position on migration and development as well as a strategic framework for dealing with the issue. That position, which was rooted in the causative factors linking migration with development, constituted the basis for a balanced and constructive dialogue, especially with Africa's Western partners, with a view to finding solutions based on development assistance, in order to close the gap between the North and the South. As a sending and receiving country, a transit State and a State that experienced the recomposition of migration flows, Algeria supported the African Union's approach overall and remained open as well to other viewpoints on the issue.

59. His delegation endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal to establish a permanent consultative forum to follow up on the High-level Dialogue. The proposed mechanism was consistent with his Government's belief that receiving, transit and sending States should work in partnership to address the underlying causes of migration and the issues and needs of each region. Moreover, the mechanism would build on the momentum already established to conduct an ongoing and inclusive dialogue engaging multiple actors in the

public and private sectors in the effort to maximize the benefits of international migration flows and reduce their negative effects. It was important at the current stage to clarify the organizational details for the consultative forum, the periodicity of its meetings, the issues it would address and arrangements to implement any action plans discussed.

60. **Mr. Ali** (Bangladesh) said that it was essential to distinguish between migrants in the traditional sense and persons who went from one country to another for short periods in response to a real or perceived demand for work in the destination country. Increasing numbers of Bangladeshis were engaging in the latter type of migration and their remittances contributed substantially to national earnings. Upon their return many of them, having acquired technology, capital and management expertise, became entrepreneurs, helping to transform the economy. In 2005, the remittances sent home by overseas workers worldwide had dwarfed the bilateral development assistance offered to developing countries.

61. The potential benefits of such employment to receiving and sending States were enormous, as demonstrated by estimates of the impact that would result from opening up just 3 per cent of the OECD labour force to short-term, less skilled workers from abroad. His Government was aware of the strong economic arguments for moving ahead, and of the political and nationalistic undertones surrounding the issue.

62. Some of the research conducted on short-term overseas employment lacked clarity or reflected prejudices. The report in 2005 of the Global Commission on International Migration had failed to address the fact that the movement of people was no longer just a North-South issue; South-South movements had become much more important. Many other research initiatives had failed to distinguish "permanent" migration from short-term movements. Some had focused on the immediate problems of trafficking and human rights abuses. Although each study contributed to the understanding of the subject, concerted and coherent approaches were required. The international community, under the leadership of the United Nations, should take the initiative in that regard.

63. Since the interest of sending and receiving States lay more in short-term overseas employment, many developed and developing countries had created elaborate structures under bilateral agreements for meeting short-term labour demands. A more transparent, inclusive and structured approach was needed. The private sector must be brought into the debate, and Governments in receiving and sending States must supervise the process. A mechanism for dialogue among the various international organizations must be found; a global forum could be considered, provided that its methods and objectives were clear.

64. **Ms. Hughes** (United States of America), speaking on agenda item 55 (b), said that in 2005 the United States had welcomed over 1 million legal permanent residents. Her country recognized the contribution made by its immigrants. It also recognized the strong impact remittances could have on families that received them and was committed to increasing migrants' access to formal banking structures and to reducing the transfer costs of remittances.

65. Her Government would continue to work with other Governments and the International Organization for Migration to warn of the dangers of irregular migration, as well as to protect and provide assistance to victims of trafficking. The United States would also continue to work with other Member States to prosecute traffickers and smugglers who committed those heinous crimes.

66. Regional dialogues were the most effective way to advance international cooperation on migration. It was unclear what practical outcomes the proposed global forum on migration would achieve. The forum could prove a hindrance and be counterproductive to the good work being done at the regional level. Instead of creating new structures, the international community should focus on improving what already existed, including the Global Migration Group.

67. **Mr. Liu** Zhenmin (China), speaking on agenda item 55 (a), (c) and (d), stressed that globalization should be based on universal participation. The international multilateral mechanism, with the United Nations at its core, was best placed to allow all countries to participate in world affairs on an equal footing. The Doha Round should be resumed as early as possible, and trade protectionism should be opposed. The focus should be on poverty eradication, financing for development and capacity-building, and on the realization of the Millennium Development Goals.

68. In the globalization process, diversity should be maintained, with due respect for the development road chosen by different countries. Dissemination and sharing of advances in science and technology should become an important part of the globalization process. The system of intellectual property rights should be a tool for promoting technical innovation, not a shackle impeding the sharing of knowledge.

69. The rapid progress of economic globalization and science and technology had created a new platform where world cultures could merge; however, the rich cultural heritage of many developing countries had not yet been tapped. The United Nations should discuss the issue of culture and development, with a view to creating an enabling environment for cultural exchange.

70. The developing countries were the main victims of the practices associated with crimes of corruption, including the transfer of illicit assets abroad. Those assets could not be tracked by individual countries on their own. Signatories of the United Nations Convention against Corruption should reinforce anti-corruption cooperation, jointly explore and establish effective international coordination mechanisms, offer legal assistance to each other and cooperate in the field of law enforcement, so as to bring culprits to justice and return the transferred illicit assets to the countries of origin.

71. **Mr. Tharyat** (Indonesia), speaking on agenda item 55 (d), said that in 2004, the Government of Indonesia had initiated an anti-corruption drive that was unparalleled in its history. Indonesia had ratified the United Nations Convention against Corruption in September 2006. The Government was working to enhance coordination among law enforcement agencies, including through close coordination with the National Commission on Combating Corruption and the National Coordination Team on Corruption Charges. Ordinary citizens and organizations were entitled to report suspected corruption activities to the authorities and to provide information on ongoing corruption cases. There were some encouraging signs already: bribes to Government officials as a share of production cost had dropped from 10.8 per cent in 2001 to 6.4 per cent in 2005.

72. Indonesia wished to offer to host the second session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention against Corruption to be held in 2007.

73. **Mr. Raja** (Indonesia), speaking on agenda item 55 (b), said that the Indonesian Government was committed to strengthening cooperation with other States on migration issues. Recognizing the vital role of remittances, Indonesia acknowledged that transfer costs should be lowered, and favourable policies should be formulated in that regard.

74. His Government supported the establishment of a global consultative forum on international migration and development proposed by the Secretary-General, which must remain true to the ideas formulated in preparation for the High-level Dialogue. Future discussions must reflect on the multidimensional aspects of international migration and development, including issues such as the impact of international migration on economic and social development; measures to ensure respect for and protection of the human rights of migrants; ways to facilitate the transfer of remittances; the building of global partnerships; and the sharing of best practices at all levels.

75. Stressing the importance of regional consultative processes, he recalled that Indonesia had co-chaired the Bali Process on People Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons and hosted the Third Ministerial Consultations on Overseas Employment and Contractual Labour for Countries of Origin in Asia, held in the context of the Colombo Process. Indonesia invited the Global Migration Group to participate with member countries in following up the High-level Dialogue, particularly with regard to the discussions held during the round tables.

76. **Mr. Asare** (Ghana), speaking on agenda item 55 (b), said that brain drain was unquestionably one of the adverse effects of migration for countries like Ghana. His delegation supported the call for ethical recruitment practices in the labour market and for destination countries to support education and training programmes in the source countries.

77. Despite the improvement in regard to remittance flows, most countries of origin were still grappling with how to effectively harness the capital generated for national development. To deal with that situation, Ghana, with financial support from the United Kingdom Department for International Development, the International Organization for Migration, Italy, the European Union and the Netherlands, had initiated a programme that allowed Ghanaian professionals in the diaspora to make their expertise available in their home

country. Other initiatives included encouraging Ghanaians to invest in viable business ventures. The ultimate objective was for most of the Ghanaian professionals participating in temporary return programmes to remain permanently and contribute more meaningfully to the country's development.

78. Ghana supported the policy recommendations in paragraphs 71 and 86 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/60/871) and agreed with the Secretary-General that achieving those goals would require comprehensive and coherent national policies, as well as sustained international dialogue.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.